

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

(PCT Article 18 and Rules 43 and 44)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 15838-345PCT	FOR FURTHER ACTION see Form PCT/ISA/220 as well as, where applicable, item 5 below.	
International application No. PCT/US04/41434	International filing date (<i>day/month/year</i>) 08 December 2004 (08.12.2004)	(Earliest) Priority Date (<i>day/month/year</i>) 08 December 2003 (08.12.2003)
Applicant TREDEGAR FILM PRODUCTS CORPORATION		

This international search report has been prepared by this International Searching Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 18. A copy is being transmitted to the International Bureau.

This international search report consists of a total of 4 sheets.

☒ It is also accompanied by a copy of each prior art document cited in this report.

1. Basis of the Report

- a. With regard to the language, the international search was carried out on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.
- ☐ The international search was carried out on the basis of a translation of the international application furnished to this Authority (Rule 23.1(b)).
- b. ☐ With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, see Box No. I.
2. ☐ Certain claims were found unsearchable (See Box No. II)
3. ☒ Unity of invention is lacking (See Box No. III)
4. With regard to the title,
- ☒ the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.
- ☐ the text has been established by this Authority to read as follows:

5. With regard to the abstract,

- ☒ the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.
- ☐ the text has been established, according to Rule 38.2(b), by this Authority as it appears in Box No. IV. The applicant may, within one month from the date of mailing of this international search report, submit comments to this Authority.

6. With regard to the drawings,

- a. the figure of the drawings to be published with the abstract is Figure No. _____
- ☐ as suggested by the applicant.
- ☐ as selected by this Authority, because the applicant failed to suggest a figure.
- ☐ as selected by this Authority, because this figure better characterizes the invention.
- b. ☒ none of the figures is to be published with the abstract.

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Box No. II Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This international search report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
2. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:
3. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box No. III Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 3 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:
Please See Continuation Sheet

1. ☒ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims.
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. ☐ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

Remark on Protest ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
☒ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(7) : A61F 13/15; B32B 27/12, 31/12, 31/16

US CL : 156/244.11, 244.14, 244.18, 244.21, 253, 285; 604/381-382,358,442/394

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 156/244.11, 244.14, 244.18, 244.21, 253, 285; 604/381-382,358,442/394

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)
Please See Continuation Sheet

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5,935,682 A (WALLSTROM) 10 August 1999, see the whole document.	1-10, 12-19, 21-26, 30, 32-36
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Y		11,20,27-29,31,37-40
Y	US 5,658,639 A (CURRO et al) 19 August 1997, see the whole document.	1-26 and 28-40
Y	US 6,025,535 A (OCTAVIO et al) 15 February 2000, see the whole document.	1-26 and 28-40
Y	US 5,989,688 A (BARGE et al) 23 November 1999, see the whole document.	1-26 and 28-40
X	US 6,242,074 B1 (THOMAS) 05 June 2001, see the whole document.	27 & 32
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Y		28
Y	US 5,522,811 A (IGAUE et al) 04 June 1996, see the whole document.	28
Y	US 5,733,628 A (PELKIE) 31 March 1998, see the whole document.	27-28 & 32

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

☐ See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier application or patent published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T"

later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X"

document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y"

document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"&"

document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

23 May 2005 (23.05.2005)

Date of mailing of the international search report

15 JUN 2005

Name and mailing address of the ISA/US

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BOX III. OBSERVATIONS WHERE UNITY OF INVENTION IS LACKING

Group I, claim(s) 1-19, 21-26, 30-31, and 33-40, drawn to a method of constructing a composite and the product thereof. Independent claim 1, 9 or 10 has the following special technical feature (A): "... said composite provides a unified structure, with said unified structure providing a differential energy gradient ..." (emphasis added).

Group II, claim(s) 20-26, 30-31, and 33-40, drawn to a method of constructing a composite and the product thereof. Independent claim 20 has the following special technical feature (B): "providing apertures in said second thermoplastic layer using a pressure differential source; providing said first nonwoven layer with a first hydrophobic providing said second layer with a second hydrophilic surface energy greater than said first surface energy" (emphasis added).

Group III, claim(s) 27-32, drawn to a method for forming a material for use in an absorbent article. Independent claim 27 or 28 has the following special technical feature (C): "... introducing the composite to an activation process to create localized disturbances in the nonwoven portion of the composite such that the film is exposed through the nonwoven portions". (emphasis added).

The inventions listed as Groups I-III do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons:

The independent claims in Group I has special technical feature (A), but not special technical feature (B) or (C);
The independent claim in Group II has special technical feature (B), but not special technical feature (A) or (C); and,
The independent claims in Group III has special technical feature (C), but not special technical feature (A) or (B).
Therefore, a holding that these three groups do not relate to a single general inventive concept is proper.

This application contains claims directed to more than one species of the generic invention. These species are deemed to lack unity of invention because they are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

In order for more than one species to be examined, the appropriate additional examination fees must be paid. The species are as follows:

Species M: using an absorbent article as a topsheet;
Species N: using an absorbent article as an intermediate layer.

The claims are deemed to correspond to the species listed above in the following manner:

Claims 1-30 appear to be directed to species M; while claims 1-29 and 31 are directed to species N.

The following claim(s) are generic: claim 30 is generic to species M, while claim 31 is generic to species N.

The species listed above do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, the species lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: as noted above, species M is directed to a